

## 1999 ASSEMBLY BILL 332

May 6, 1999 - Introduced by Representatives CULLEN, CARPENTER, LA FAVE and RICHARDS, cosponsored by Senator BURKE. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 **AN ACT to amend** 346.57 (6) (a), 349.11 (2) (b), 349.11 (3) (b) and 349.11 (8) (c);  
2 and **to create** 346.05 (1g) and 346.58 (2) of the statutes; **relating to:** maximum  
3 speed limits and travel lanes applicable to trailers and semitrailers in certain  
4 counties.

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### *Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau*

Under current law, the maximum speed limits for vehicles operated in combination with a semitrailer or trailer are the same as those for an automobile. The maximum speed limit applicable to most freeways and expressways is 65 miles per hour.

This bill sets a maximum speed limit of 50 miles per hour for vehicles operated in combination with a semitrailer or trailer having a gross weight of more than 3,000 pounds. This maximum speed limit applies only on interstate highways in Milwaukee County (or any county having a population of 500,000 or more). This speed limit is not effective unless the department of transportation (DOT) erects traffic signs giving notice of the limit. The bill prohibits DOT or any local authority from modifying this maximum speed limit.

Current law generally requires that all vehicles be driven in the right half of the roadway and in the right-hand lane of a three-lane highway, except when making an approach for a left turn, when overtaking and passing or when circumstances permit or require driving on the left half of the roadway.

A person who violates either of the provisions created by this bill may be required to forfeit not less than \$30 nor more than \$300.

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This bill requires vehicles that are operated in combination with a semitrailer or trailer having a gross weight of more than 3,000 pounds to be operated only in the right-hand lane of the highway or, if three more lanes are available, in either of the two lanes farthest to the right. This requirement does not apply to any vehicle approaching to make a left-hand turn. This provision applies only on interstate highways within Milwaukee County (or any county having a population of 500,000 or more).

For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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***The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:***

1           **SECTION 1.** 346.05 (1g) of the statutes is created to read:

2           346.05 **(1g)** Notwithstanding subs. (1) and (3), a vehicle operated upon a  
3 roadway in combination with a semitrailer or trailer having a gross weight of 3,000  
4 pounds or more shall be operated only in the right-hand lane of the highway or, if  
5 the roadway is divided into 3 or more lanes marked for traffic in the direction being  
6 traveled, in either of the 2 lanes farthest to the right. This subsection does not apply  
7 to any vehicle making an approach for a left turn under circumstances in which the  
8 rules relating to left turns require driving on the left half of the roadway. This  
9 subsection applies only on an interstate highway in a county having a population of  
10 500,000 or more.

11           **SECTION 2.** 346.57 (6) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

12           346.57 **(6)** (a) On state trunk highways and connecting highways and on county  
13 trunk highways or highways marked and signed as county trunks, the speed limits  
14 specified in sub. (4) (e) and (f) are not effective unless official signs giving notice  
15 thereof have been erected by the authority in charge of maintenance of the highway  
16 in question. The speed limit specified in sub. (4) (g) and (k) and s. 346.58 (2) is not  
17 effective on any highway unless official signs giving notice thereof have been erected

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1 by the authority in charge of maintenance of the highway in question. The signs shall  
2 be erected at such points as the authority in charge of maintenance deems necessary  
3 to give adequate warning to users of the highway in question, but an alleged failure  
4 to post a highway as required by this paragraph is not a defense to a prosecution for  
5 violation of the speed limits specified in sub. (4) (e), (f), (g) or (k), or in an ordinance  
6 enacted in conformity therewith, if official signs giving notice of the speed limit have  
7 been erected at those points on the highway in question where a person traversing  
8 such highway would enter it from an area where a different speed limit is in effect.

9 **SECTION 3.** 346.58 (2) of the statutes is created to read:

10 346.58 (2) Fifty miles per hour for any vehicle that is operated in combination  
11 with a semitrailer or trailer having a gross weight greater than 3,000 pounds. This  
12 subsection applies only on an interstate highway in a county having a population of  
13 500,000 or more.

14 **SECTION 4.** 349.11 (2) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

15 349.11 (2) (b) Modify the limits stated in s. 346.57 (4) (c) or 346.58 (1).

16 **SECTION 5.** 349.11 (3) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

17 349.11 (3) (b) Modify the limits stated in s. 346.57 (4) (c) or 346.58 (1); or

18 **SECTION 6.** 349.11 (8) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

19 349.11 (8) (c) Maximum speed limits which are not uniformly applicable to all  
20 types of motor vehicles using a highway, except that a lower speed limit may be  
21 established for any vehicle operating under a special permit because of any weight  
22 or dimension of such vehicle and except as provided in s. 346.58 (2).

23 **SECTION 7. Initial applicability.**

24 (1) The treatment of section 346.05 (1g) of the statutes first applies to vehicles  
25 operated on the effective date of this subsection.

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**SECTION 8**

1           **SECTION 8. Effective date.**

2           (1) This act takes effect on the first day of the 3rd month beginning after  
3           publication.

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